

What we do here will help people none of us here will ever meet. Yet think of nearly a million children in Africa who would die if we do not act. So it becomes a moral issue. America, again, helping people we will never know or see, but we do it because it is the moral thing to do and we have the wealth and technology to do it.

Under H.J. Res. 20, funding for international peacekeeping operations will receive an additional \$113 million above the amount in the continuing resolution enacted last year. This will ensure that our assessed dues to the U.N. are paid and we do not fall further behind in our support for troops in 13 countries, including Lebanon, Sudan, Haiti, and the Congo where, again, it is in our best interests to support these peacekeeping missions.

We provide \$50 million to support the African Union troops in Darfur and southern Sudan. These funds had been omitted last year, but they are needed for the 7,000 troops at 34 camps throughout Sudan. When we read about the genocide in Sudan, about the children who have been murdered, women who have been raped, people who have been killed as they flee the ashes of their homes, how can we, as Americans say we can't do something to stop it?

There is \$20 million here to support Iraqi refugees. That is an amount which, unfortunately, will only begin to address the catastrophe that is unfolding. In fact, additional aid, as we know, will be needed for Iraqi refugees in the fiscal year 2007 supplemental. The number of refugees is going up every day. The ability to care for them is insufficient.

So the clock is ticking. The urgency with which the Senate must act to pass the joint funding resolution should be measured not in time but in human lives. As Members of the Senate and the American people can readily see, this legislation involves issues of life and death.

The additional funds were designated by the chairmen and ranking members of the Senate and House Appropriations Committees to support the priorities of both Democratic and Republican Senators, without exceeding the total funding ceiling set by the President.

I have said so many times on the floor of the Senate, on questions of diseases that could be prevented, if Members of the Senate have young children or grandchildren or their friends do, we know that at certain times as they are growing up they go to the pediatrician, they get vaccinated against measles and other diseases. And they are protected. We take it as a matter of course. We get the bill and we pay it, but that bill is close to the amount many people in Africa would earn in a year. They also know that their children may not get those vaccinations. They will not go to the pediatrician when they are 5 years old because many of them die before they are 5 years old.

Oftentimes the mothers are not there to care for them either because of hundreds of thousands of women die needlessly in childbirth.

We can make a dramatic change. I agree with the President, I agree with Members on both sides of the aisle, and I commend those who have supported this. But also to those people around the world who have urged America, the most powerful Nation on Earth, to stand up and do these humanitarian things, this is a small down payment on what the wealthiest, most powerful Nation on Earth can do. It is something that speaks to the moral character of America and makes us a better nation and makes the lives of people we will never see better.

I am reminded of my dear friend Bono, who is known all over the world for doing this, and who I commended for helping people throughout the world who would never hear his music, who do not recognize him, who will never buy a ticket to one of his concerts but whose lives are measurably better because of him. We have it in our power to do the same thing.

Madam President, while I have been here the occupant of the Chair changed from the time I started my comments to now. I hope it will show on the RECORD and will be corrected to say "Madam President." One of the problems when you have been here as long as I have is you get used to saying "Mr. President." And, of course, the Chair is now occupied by the Senator from Minnesota, one of the welcome new faces in the Senate, somebody who has improved the Senate just by being here.

I was reminded of some who came here at a time when this was an all-male Senate, and it has improved substantially by the fact that it is no longer nor ever will be, I believe, in our lifetimes, an all-male body.

I apologize to the Presiding Officer who came to the Chair following the distinguished Senator from Nebraska. Of course, I refer to her with pride, I might say, and with gratitude, as Madam President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. KLOBUCHAR). Under the previous order, the Senator from Alabama has 45 minutes.

#### CONGRATULATING SENATOR THAD COCHRAN ON HIS 10,000TH VOTE

Mr. SHELBY. Madam President, before I get into what I want to talk about this afternoon at length, and that would be Iraq and our military operation there, I would be remiss if I didn't say a few words about our colleague and friend, Senator THAD COCHRAN of Mississippi, the former chairman and now the ranking Republican on the Appropriations Committee, who cast, as we all know from our colleagues' talks today, his 10,000th vote in the Senate. I have known Senator COCHRAN for 28 years, since I first came to the U.S. House of Representatives. I

can tell you, without any reservation, he is a gentleman. He is a bright, very engaged Senator. He knows the appropriations process, but he is courteous to all of us. He will always listen to us, although his position might be 180 degrees from what we are talking about.

I congratulate him for this achievement. This is a milestone in the Senate. I don't know if I will ever be here for 10,000 votes. Not many people, as Senator BYRD mentioned this morning, have. So this is a feat in itself. I congratulate Senator COCHRAN for his diligence and his service to the Nation and to the people of Mississippi in the Senate and, before then, in the House of Representatives, and also as a naval officer, as a young man out of Old Miss Law School.

#### IRAQ

Mr. SHELBY. Madam President, I rise today to discuss U.S. military operations in Iraq.

Four years ago, we invaded Iraq to disarm an oppressor's regime and restore control of that country to its own people. In the early hours of March 20, 2003, the United States, joined by our coalition partners, began a military campaign against the regime of Saddam Hussein. Code named "shock and awe," the first 24 hours of combat operations filled the country with punishing air attacks. As the massive firestorm of bombs and missiles targeted Iraqi leadership, ground forces rolled towards Iraq's capital.

Without question, our military operations were swift and decisive. Approximately 120,000 U.S. troops, as well as a number of forces from our coalition partners, led the invasion into Iraq. Ground forces moved into Baghdad, formally occupied the city, and the Hussein government collapsed approximately 3 weeks after military operations began. Saddam Hussein and his top leadership were captured, killed, or forced into hiding by coalition forces.

With Saddam on the run many Iraqis celebrated the downfall of the oppressive regime.

While some fighting in Iraq continued, the major battles appeared over just one month after the start of the military campaign. And 43 days after announcing the beginning of the war, President Bush declared that, "Major combat operations in Iraq have ended. In the battle of Iraq, the United States and our allies have prevailed."

Undoubtedly, the President was wrong. After remarkable success during the initial combat operations, it appears that the Bush administration did not sufficiently prepare for the consequences of their military victory. The Bush administration could not have known everything about what it would find in Iraq.

But it could have, and should have, done far more than it did.

As George Washington once said, "There is nothing so likely to produce

peace as to be well prepared to meet the enemy." In the aftermath of the overthrow of Saddam Hussein and the Baathist regime, the U.S. proved it was ill-equipped for the post combat environment it would face. As a result, the Bush administration made grave and glaring political, military, and intelligence miscalculations.

As it turned out, the defeat of the Iraqi army was just the beginning of the war. Prewar plans drastically underestimated the number of troops necessary in a post-Saddam Iraq.

The troop level of the invasion force proved inadequate to hold the country together after Saddam's regime was removed. The Bush administration failed to heed the warnings of experienced, senior military officers who stressed the need for a large force structure in country to provide security.

In particular, on the eve of the invasion, then Chief of Staff of the Army, General Eric Shinseki, predicted "something on the order of several hundred thousand soldiers" would be required to keep peace in a postwar Iraq.

While it is evident that General Shinseki was on the mark with his force calculations, the general's comments were quickly dismissed by the Department of Defense as "wildly off the mark." Consequently, the U.S. invaded with what proved to be an insufficient number of troops to secure a postwar Iraq.

Immediately after the invasion, it was readily apparent that serious miscalculations, poor prewar planning, misguided assumptions, and wildly optimistic administration reporting was the order of the day. When the Iraqi Government collapsed, there was no framework in place capable of filling the military, political, and economic void.

U.S. combat units were assigned to patrol large urban areas with no sense of their mission and no standard set of operating procedures. Looting and other criminal activities were rampant. The U.S. forces were vastly inadequate to control the mounting violence, since the Bush administration had mistakenly believed that U.S. forces would be greeted as liberators rather than as occupiers. The reality was widespread lawlessness throughout the country.

To make matters worse, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld denounced the extent of the chaos as simply an expression of pent-up hostility towards the old regime.

"It's untidy," Rumsfeld said. "And freedom's untidy. And free people are free to make mistakes and commit crimes."

We clearly underestimated the disorder and chaos the toppling of the regime would cause. Then we failed to effectively respond to it once it did. The Bush administration simply did not believe that a major reconstruction effort would be required and they were unprepared when the Iraqi infrastructure collapsed. As a result, interagency ri-

valry and turf wars between the Departments of Defense and State plagued the immediate restoration of security and basic services.

Amid the escalating violence and civil disorder, the Department of Defense deployed a small reconstruction effort, led by retired Lieutenant General Jay Garner. Garner became the Bush administration's fall guy for the problems and chaos in Iraq. He was blamed for not implementing key services or restoring order fast enough. Yet, he was prevented from cooperating with planners in the Central Command and denied key personnel increases. He was replaced less than one month after reconstruction efforts began.

At this critical juncture, perhaps the single most important event in the destabilization of Iraq after the cessation of large scale military operations occurred—Garner's replacement, Ambassador Paul Bremer, demobilized the Iraqi Army.

The abrupt decision in May 2003 to disband the entire force, including apolitical conscripts, may have been one of the most grievous mistakes made by our occupying force. The decision allowed enemies of a democratic Iraq the time necessary to regroup and infiltrate the under-secured nation.

We disbanded an organization that would have been vital for providing security and assisting in the rebuilding. The 300,000 strong force almost immediately morphed from soldiers to bitter, unemployed, armed terrorists who became prime recruits for the insurgency efforts. The result of this one decision, gave an enormous boost to the forces of instability in Iraq.

In the fall of 2003, the administration faced the dilemma of securing a nation with a limited occupation force and no Iraqi security structures in place.

While the Bush administration could have opted to deploy additional forces from the United States, the Department of Defense chose to speed up the Iraqi Army training program. The effect, inevitably, produced Iraqi soldiers who were neither properly trained nor fully committed to the mission.

This problem became even more severe with the creation of the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps. The Corps' purpose was to provide local militia forces as adjuncts to the Iraqi army. However, the Bush administration was impatient to create more Iraqi troops to illustrate that additional U.S. forces were unnecessary.

They once again increased the training pace which restricted the vetting process of the Iraqi troops. The result was an Iraqi Civil Defense Corps limited in its combat capability, thoroughly infiltrated by insurgents, who predictably collapsed whenever committed to combat.

With nothing to fill the power void left by the regime's fall, the U.S. ended up creating a failed state that allowed the insurgency to develop.

The United States did not anticipate the deeply divided Iraqi society—one

with the Sunnis resentful over the loss of their dominant position and the Shiites seeking power commensurate with their majority status—would devolve the country into sectarian violence.

The Bush administration was clearly unprepared for the likelihood that these ethnic differences and the dramatic shift in the power dynamics would cause the sects to engage in violent conflict. Perhaps even more importantly, the administration did not foresee that the U.S. military, as an occupying force, would itself be the target of resentment and armed attacks.

Since the invasion, lingering Shiite resentment and Sunni fears associated with the shift in power have helped transform local and individual political or economic disputes into broader religious confrontations. Moreover, the Bush administration insisted that all of the problems of the country were caused by the insurgency, rather than that all of the problems of the country were helping to fuel the insurgency. Security was not established after the fall of the Ba'athist government and still remains beyond our grasp.

As a result, the hardening of sectarian and ethnic identities in a postwar Iraq has created significant anxiety among Iraq's neighbors, many of whom also have religiously and ethnically diverse populations. Toppling the regime and dismantling the Iraqi armed forces removed a potential military threat to the Middle East region. Yet, it also eliminated the area's principal strategic counterbalance to Iran. The instability and violence in Iraq, coupled with Iraq's neighbors' fears of an emboldened and potentially hostile Iran, has created new concerns among Middle Eastern nations and sparked increased interest in the future of Iraq.

In particular, Gulf governments worry that escalating sectarian violence in Iraq could spread to Iraq's mainly Sunni neighbors and force them into conflict with Shiite-controlled Iran. Gulf governments also believe that regions in Iraq could become safe havens for terrorist organizations if the Iraqi government collapses or the U.S. withdraws troops precipitously.

As we debate a strategy for Iraq, we need to make certain we paint the big picture and understand what is at stake. If we precipitously withdraw our troops, we will open the door for the Iranians to exert even more influence in both Iraq and the Middle East.

Iran clearly has regional aspirations that will significantly increase without a counterbalance in the Persian Gulf.

However, more than just the strategic balance of the region is at stake. The oil reserves in Iraq are vast—believed to be only second in size in the Middle East to those of Saudi Arabia. Imagine over half the world's oil in the hands of the mullahs in Tehran. Picture the world with another nuclear power that hates the United States and all it stands for. The President is correct when he states that those who say

the future of Iraq is not a direct threat to our national security are deluding themselves.

Madam President, we are now living with the consequences of successive policy failures. The blunders, miscalculations, and failed leadership made by the Bush administration continue to this day.

As I stand here today, one thing is clear—we are at a crossroads.

One month ago, President Bush addressed the Nation and outlined a new strategy in Iraq. Since that time, the merit and purpose of escalating U.S. troops has been debated around the country. This week, the Senate brought forth several resolutions expressing various viewpoints on the subject.

One resolution, introduced by Senators WARNER and LEVIN, disagrees with the troop escalation strategy, but like all the resolutions on Iraq, it is not binding. It cannot deter the President from sending more troops. It cannot withdraw the troops currently in Iraq. And it does not limit the President's power as Commander-in-Chief. That is set in the Constitution.

However, what this resolution does is state that we, the United States Senate, the same body that 4 years prior authorized the use of force in Iraq, no longer has confidence in the U.S. strategy in Iraq.

Far more significantly, it sends the message to our brave fighting men and women that although the Senate will not stop you from deploying and engaging the enemy, we do not think you can succeed in your mission. That is a message I refuse to send.

Therefore, I do not support the Warner-Levin resolution. Our service members need clear direction—not mixed messages from the United States Senate. The Armed Forces need support, both materially and morally, from the policymakers who sent them into combat. Ambiguity has no place in our strategy or operations in Iraq.

My opposition to this resolution, however, should not be confused with blind support of the President's policy. I have grave concerns and serious doubts about the future of Iraq and what role the United States will play there. As we scrutinize the new strategy put forth by the President, numerous and troubling questions arise about the future of U.S. involvement.

Should we put more of our servicemembers in harm's way?

Is the number of troops in the surge enough? Or do we need more?

Is it too late to recover and should we just cut our losses and begin to withdraw our troops?

If we did withdraw, what would be the cost?

American prestige?

An unleashing of transnational terrorism?

The establishment of Iran as the dominant force in the Middle East?

Will the Iraqi government step up to help secure the country? Or will send-

ing more troops only delay Iraq's government from taking more responsibility?

The questions could go on and on. In the words of Winston Churchill who once said, "You ask, what is our policy? You ask, what is our aim?" I believe there are three fundamental questions that must be answered before moving forward:

What is our goal in Iraq? How do we measure success? Just stating that success is the establishment of a democratic and secure government in Iraq is too broad a definition. It represents an endless engagement for the U.S. We need more definable, measurable objectives. That is a basic principle of war.

How do we achieve it? What is our strategy? Not just our military strategy, but our overall strategy involving military, political, economic, and social components.

And is this new plan set forth by the President a viable option? Is it a rational strategy that will lead to achieving our objectives, which will in turn lead to success in Iraq?

When combat operations began, our goal was straightforward—to enable Iraq to be stable, unified, and democratic, able to provide for its own security, a partner in the global war on terror, and a model for reform in the Middle East.

Four years later, the country has descended into chaos. While the formal political framework for a democratic government has advanced, insurgent and sectarian violence has increased and become more widespread. Is it still plausible to believe that the U. S. can unify this country so that it will be able to sustain a viable democratic government?

We are fighting an insurgency in Iraq. American forces and the Iraqi people have the same enemies—the Shiite, Sunni, and al-Qaida terrorists, illegal militias, Iranian agents, and Saddam loyalists who stand between the Iraqi people and their future as a free nation.

Only through a combination of military force, political dialogue, economic development and reform, and increased security for the population will we be able to restore peace. Therefore, we are now confronted with this question: How will the United States reverse Iraq's steady decline into sectarian and radical religious chaos and bring stability to violence-torn parts of the country?

In the announcement of an imminent deployment of 21,500 additional U.S. servicemembers to Iraq, the Bush administration radically shifted its Iraq policy.

By increasing the amount of "boots on the ground," many of the basic tenets of the President's Iraq strategy thus far have been repudiated—in particular, that political progress would eventually suppress the violence. The question now becomes, will the increase in our armed forces in Baghdad help stabilize the country and stop the spiral into a civil war, or is it too late?

We have entered into a quagmire, and there is no easy exit. This is not a war that will be won overnight and it is dangerous to believe that if we set an artificial time line to withdraw troops that the terrorist violence would not follow us home.

The consequence of failure in Iraq is the strengthening and growth of radical extremists who will use the country as a safe haven for their terrorist organizations to threaten the safety and security of the United States and the entire free world.

No one appears to have the answer to the calamity that is the current state of affairs in Iraq.

Even those outspoken detractors of the Bush plan do not offer practical alternatives. Cutting and running is not an option, not for the United States. Even the appearance of doing so under another name is unacceptable, I believe, at any level. It is clear, though, that things cannot continue forward on this path. The administration and the Congress must find a viable strategy for U.S. involvement in Iraq.

I will not stand before you, Madam President, and assert that the Bush plan is not without flaws, nor will I state I am completely confident an additional 21,500 troops will turn the war around, will stabilize Baghdad. We will know that answer soon enough, all of us. But what I do know is this: When you vote to send troops into combat, it becomes your responsibility to ensure their mission is clearly defined, they have realistic military objectives, and they have the best equipment to achieve these goals.

As Congress debates the President's plan—and we will—as new ideas and strategies, perhaps new resolutions are brought forward, one thing, I submit, must remain constant: the support we give our soldiers, our service members around the world in harm's way.

I acknowledge there are different views within Congress about the way forward in Iraq, but Congress, in my judgment, should never let political infighting lead to bartering for bullets. Cutting off funding for our troops or even under any kind of name or guise should never be an option. The members of the U.S. Armed Forces willingly face grave dangers for each and every one of us. They have bravely faced sometimes an unknown enemy and have done everything that has been asked of them. Abandoning our servicemembers, our soldiers, hampering their ability to fight or cutting off funds for necessary military equipment or supplies cannot be an alternative, in my judgment. We should never take any action that will endanger our Armed Forces fighting in combat.

No one, I believe, wants to bring our troops safely home more than I do or you do, Madam President. Yet while many oppose sending more troops, no one in Congress has yet proposed an alternative that allows Iraq to stabilize. Therefore, the last question I pose to the Senate is: Why is no one looking

for a way to win as opposed to simply a way out? This should be part of the debate in the few weeks ahead.

I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LOTT. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LOTT. Madam President, if I may inquire about the situation, are we now considering the continuing resolution, the appropriations bill?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is in a period for the transaction of morning business. The Senator is permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes.

#### CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007

Mr. LOTT. Madam President, I will take advantage of the 10 minutes, then, to talk about the pending continuing resolution or, as others refer to it, the Omnibus appropriations bill. I have watched bills of this nature come and go over the years. Obviously, it is not the best way to do the job.

On occasion—I remember back in 1996 and two or three times since I have been in the Senate—we actually completed all of our appropriations by the end of the fiscal year, and that is the way it ought to be done. In order to get that done, we have to start working on it in May, not June, not July, and not in the fall. Regular order is the way it should be done, and I am pleased to hear our two leaders say that is the way they intend to proceed this year.

But for a variety of reasons, sometimes in spite of our best efforts, we don't often complete our work by the end of the fiscal year because it is quite difficult to get agreement as to what the figures will be in providing funds for the people's business in the Federal Government.

And so we pass these continuing resolutions. They always bother me because they pull in a huge number of agencies, bureaus, departments, and money into one big pile, and it is very hard to know all that is going to go on as a result of that kind of procedure. That is where we find ourselves.

This is a \$463 billion bill, as I am sure others have pointed out, and it funds most all of the discretionary programs of the Federal Government, from transportation and education to housing. The only thing it doesn't include is defense and homeland security. And so here we are trying to finish up that process for this year's funds, this fiscal year.

We can certainly exchange criticisms of how we got here, and I think there is some legitimate criticism that is due. But the way we handled things the last time we had a similar situation, in 2003, we did go through an amendment

process. According to Senator MCCONNELL, I think we had close to probably 100 amendments. We voted about 30 times, but we got through it in a reasonable period of time, and we can do that here, too.

I understand the leadership would like to go ahead and move through this as quickly as possible and get on to the regular business in the calendar year, so I can't be too critical about that. But I am very concerned about how we deal with some of the substantive issues in this legislation.

I have no doubt Democrats and Republicans have issues they think should have been funded that are not going to be funded by this bill, and others believe some of the things that are funded shouldn't be. One should never believe that there are not earmarks on an appropriations bill. I have tried to deal with earmarks. I have tried to out-wrestle appropriators ever since I have been in Congress, going back to when I was in the House. You always lose because they know where all the numbers are buried. So don't be fooled. There are some earmarks in here. Maybe they are justified. There are what we call anomalies, which are those situations where if we do not increase the funding it will create some problems.

The perfect example is the Federal Aviation Administration. We don't want the FAA furloughing air traffic controllers, so we have to add enough funds to make sure they have their straight-line funding or whatever is necessary to make sure they can continue their operations.

There are, however, two or three areas that specifically bother me. I am not a fan of the base closure procedure. I have voted against it every time it has come up while I have been in Congress. I did it in the House, and I have done so in the Senate. I have always opposed BRAC. I think it is an abrogation of responsibility of those serving in the Congress. We shouldn't hand off to some commission the decision as to whether we leave a base open or close it, or what troops are moved in and moved out.

Rightly or wrongly, we did it. As part of that package, we told our different communities that we were going to clean up the base facilities that were going to be closed and that we were going to have remediation so that when the community got it back they had something that was usable and not environmentally dangerous. We told communities in Kansas and in Georgia that we were going to move huge new numbers into their bases to take the place of bases that we were closing in Europe and other bases around the country.

We said we were going to provide additional funds to provide training facilities and living facilities to improve the quality of life for our troops and their families, so that when they do come back by the thousands—and 12,000 are being added to at least one of

the bases in the country—we will have the facilities to provide for proper housing and training.

This bill, however, cuts out \$3.1 billion that was to go for that purpose, and it redistributes that money around social welfare spending. We can debate the value of those other programs, but my question is: Is that a wise thing to do right now when we are trying to bring some of our troops home from Europe? Who are they defending the Europeans against? The Soviet Union? It is gone. Eastern Europe is part of Europe now. So I really am concerned.

I do think we should have it paid for, and a .8-percent, across-the-board cut will take care of the funds so that it is revenue neutral. I just think it sends a terrible message, once again, to our troops, troops whom we have been fighting to bring home from these remote assignments, that when they get here there is going to be a problem. They are going to be living in World War II barracks in Fort Leavenworth, KS. I am sure Senator ROBERTS talked about that. And that is an issue we need to address.

Some people have said we will add the \$3.1 billion back with the appropriations supplemental bill, but that means it will be added to the deficit. I think we should provide the funds and make sure they are paid for.

There are a number of other areas to which others have referred. Education is one area. We can argue over our priorities, but I have every reason to believe that there are some areas in education where we need to be able to adjust the numbers a little bit.

So I wanted to talk about the substance, first of all. I think Republicans and Democrats should be able to have a reasonable number of amendments. I am not for an unlimited number. I don't think we should use it to be dilatory. But there has never been a bill written that was perfect, and neither is this one. We need to have a few opportunities for Democrats and Republicans to offer some relevant amendments.

I don't think we ought to get off and relitigate budget issues or budget process issues or issues with regard to Iraq but not directly related here, but I do think we should allow a few amendments. I would urge our leaders to come to that agreement. I would urge Senator REID to be amenable to that. The majority is never going to be able to force their way in the Senate. It doesn't make a difference how big the majority is or how much power they have. It doesn't work that way. How do I know? I found out the hard way, more than once.

I don't think we should have a permission slip in the Senate. We can't have a deal where in order to offer an amendment we have to have permission. No. This is the Senate. Senators are going to offer their amendments. Sooner or later, they are going to do it.

I even filled up the tree. I am tied for the record of filling up the tree. Senator George Mitchell and I are the